

Audiology/Speech Pathology

Speechreading

Speechreading (commonly called lip-reading) is a visual aid for people when they cannot hear or understand a speaker. By working together, our eyes and ears can enhance our understanding of speech.

Suggestions for People with a Hearing Impairment

- Tell other people you have difficulty hearing.
- Do not pretend that you have heard and understood someone if you have not. The speaker will realize this when you respond incorrectly or inappropriately.
- Look at people when talking.
- The farther away you are from the speaker, the softer the speech. Try to be no more than six feet away from the speaker whenever possible.
- Other people may appear to be 'mumbling.' A hearing loss may make it sound like speakers are mumbling but they rarely are.
- Avoid noisy areas. If you cannot find a quiet spot, choose a seat near a wall or corner rather than in the center of the room.

Suggestions for Family/Friends

- Do not talk unless you are in the same room with the listener. The farther away you are, the softer your voice is.
- Get the person's attention before you start speaking. Tapping the shoulder, waving or calling the person by name is usually effective. Do not start speaking until you have his/her attention and then look directly at him/her.
- Do not speak directly into the person's ear. Keep your face visible.
- Speak at a normal or slightly louder volume. Do not shout. It distorts speech, making it harder to understand.
- Speak at a normal rate, careful not to go too rapidly.
- Speak distinctly but do not exaggerate movements of your mouth. Again, this may distort your speech.
- Do not cover your lips when speaking. Smoking, chewing gum, or holding your hands in front of your face may interfere with speechreading.
- If the person does not understand what is said, rephrase it, rather than simply repeating. Short phrases are easier to understand than long, complex sentences.
- Have light shine on your face. Avoid standing in front of a light or window. It puts your face in shadows.
- If the information you are giving is important, ask the listener to tell you the important points rather than asking yes/no questions.
- **Be patient. Keep in mind that hearing may vary with days, times, or moods.**

Audiology Clinics

Albany

VA Medical Center
113 Holland Avenue
Albany, NY 12208
(518) 626-5820

Canandaigua

VA Medical Center
400 Fort Hill Avenue
Canandaigua, NY 14424
(585) 393-7891

Batavia

VA Western New York
Healthcare System
222 Richmond Avenue
Batavia, NY 14020
(585) 432-7287

Rochester

VA Outpatient Clinic
465 Westfall Road
Rochester, NY 14620
(585) 241-2010

Bath

VA Medical Center
76 Veterans Avenue
Bath, NY 14810
(607) 664-4418

Syracuse

VA Medical Center
800 Irving Avenue
Syracuse, NY 13210
(315) 477-4525

Buffalo

VA Western New York
Healthcare System
3495 Bailey Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14215
(716) 862-6095